

AMENDED IN SENATE MARCH 28, 2016

**Senate Joint Resolution**

**No. 20**

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**Introduced by Senator Hall**

*(Coauthors: Senators Block, Glazer, Hertzberg, Hill, Leno, Monning,  
Wieckowski, and Wolk)*

*(Coauthors: Assembly Members Bloom, Dodd, Cristina Garcia,  
Gonzalez, Mullin, and Rodriguez)*

January 15, 2016

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Senate Joint Resolution No. 20—Relative to gun violence.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SJR 20, as amended, Hall. Gun violence: research.

This measure would urge the Congress of the United States to lift an existing prohibition against publicly funded scientific research on the causes of gun violence and its effects on public health, and to appropriate funds for the purpose of conducting that research.

Fiscal committee: no.

1 WHEREAS, Every day, gun violence destroys lives, families,  
2 and communities; and

3 WHEREAS, From 2002 to 2013, inclusive, California lost  
4 38,576 individuals to gun violence, of which 2,258 were children;  
5 and

6 WHEREAS, In 2013 alone, guns were used to kill 2,900  
7 Californians, including 251 children and teenagers, and hospitalized  
8 another 6,035 Californians for nonfatal gunshot wounds, including  
9 1,275 children and teenagers; and

10 WHEREAS, There were over 350 recorded mass shootings in  
11 the United States in 2015; and

1 WHEREAS, Since 1996, Congress has adopted annual policy  
2 riders, known as the “Dickey Amendment” and “Rehberg  
3 Amendment,” that effectively prohibit the federal Centers for  
4 Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and other agencies under  
5 the federal Department of Health and Human Services from  
6 conducting publicly funded scientific research on the causes of  
7 gun violence or its effects on public health; and

8 WHEREAS, The author of the original Dickey Amendment,  
9 former Representative Jay Dickey (R-AR), has stated repeatedly  
10 that he regrets offering the amendment and thinks it should be  
11 repealed; and

12 WHEREAS, Despite Representative Dickey’s comments and  
13 President Obama’s executive action in 2013 directing the CDC to  
14 resume gun violence research, Congress has provided no funding,  
15 and the restrictive language remains in place; and

16 WHEREAS, Since 1996, the federal government has spent \$240  
17 million per year on traffic safety research, which has saved 360,000  
18 lives since 1970; and

19 WHEREAS, During the same period there has been almost no  
20 publicly funded research on gun violence, which kills the same  
21 number of people every year; and

22 WHEREAS, Recently, 110 Members of the Congress of the  
23 United States signed a letter urging the leadership of the House of  
24 Representatives to end the longstanding ban on federal funding  
25 for gun violence research, and over 2,000 doctors in all 50 states  
26 plus the District of Columbia did the same; and

27 WHEREAS, Although Members of Congress may disagree  
28 about how best to respond to the problem of gun violence, we  
29 should be able to agree that a response should be informed by  
30 sound scientific evidence; and

31 WHEREAS, Whether it is horrific headline-generating massacres  
32 or unseen violence that occurs every day — the innocent child  
33 gunned down in crossfire, the mother murdered during a domestic  
34 dispute, or the young life cut tragically short during the heat of a  
35 petty argument — the call to action is now clear; now, therefore,  
36 be it

37 *Resolved by the Senate and the Assembly of the State of*  
38 *California, jointly,* That a comprehensive evidence-based federal  
39 approach to reducing and preventing gun violence is needed to

1 ensure that our communities are safe from gun violence; and be it  
2 further

3 *Resolved*, That federal research is crucial to saving lives, having  
4 driven policy to save lives from motor vehicle accidents, sudden  
5 infant death syndrome, lead poisoning, and countless other public  
6 health crises; and be it further

7 *Resolved*, That the Legislature urges the Congress of the United  
8 States to promptly lift the prohibition against publicly funded  
9 scientific research on the causes of gun violence and its effects on  
10 public health, and to appropriate funds to the *federal* Centers for  
11 Disease Control and Prevention and other relevant agencies under  
12 the *federal* Department of Health and Human Services to conduct  
13 that research; and be it further

14 *Resolved*, That the Secretary of the Senate transmit copies of  
15 this resolution to the President and Vice President of the United  
16 States, to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, to the  
17 Majority Leader of the Senate, to each Senator and Representative  
18 from California in the Congress of the United States, and to the  
19 author for appropriate distribution.